

5/30/19 MN CREP Training Webinar Question and Answer

Q: Why can't we use existing CRP as a round-out? There would be no cost to the state to establish the practice. This contradicts the existing CRP statement that states "This provision is available to all eligible MN CREP CRP practices. The existing CRP will be limited to no more than 50% of the acres enrolled."

A: Existing CRP can only be enrolled under 1. Existing CRP Land. The other categories have primary purposes that do not include permanently protecting currently enrolled CRP. If there is a proposed application that will exceed the 50% limit send the specific request to Tabor for consideration. We do not anticipate approving many waivers due to the extremely high cost of enrolling RIM-Only Cropland and the landowner is already getting a significant payment under their existing CRP contract.

Q: For a CP23a application, the CRP portion is still an upland to wetland ratio of 4:1, and the RIM only is an additional 4:1, but not part of the CRP contract?

A: Yes, the RIM only crop acres are additional acres that can be added to an application once the CRP 4:1 ratio has been fulfilled, the RIM addition is capped at 8:1 upland:wetland and all the acres will be included in the final RIM easement and RIM Conservation plan. During the application phase, please provide as much clarification and information as possible as to what acres fall into CRP vs RIM only.

Q: Buffer law question- What if the landowner has been approved for "Alternate Practices" and the required buffer is only 16 feet?

A: During negotiations with USDA FSA at the National Level Alternative Practices were probably the biggest point of disagreement. Due to the uncertainty that the Alternative Practices will stay on the land for the 15 year CRP contracts as well as into perpetuity they are not considered for a MN CREP (or stand-alone CRP) application. The first 50 or 16.5 feet cannot be included in the CRP MN CREP contract and only in certain situations (see Guidance Document) will the first 50 feet be enrolled and paid for as RIM-Only Non-cropland.

Q: Is the mapping of the buffer going to be the responsibility of the SWCD? Or is BWSR just going to remove the first 50 feet? The buffer law does allow a minimum of 30 feet as long as there is an average of 50 feet so we should not be penalizing landowners who meet the average.

A: It will be the responsibility of the field staff at SWCD offices to make the determinations on buffer width and what acres are to be excluded from the CREP acres.

Q: Will there be 2019 CREP/RIM rates released?

A: As of right now we will still be using the 2018 RIM rates, if you need a new copy of the rates let RIM staff know and we can send out them to you. The new MN CREP rates issued in June of 2018 included MN CREP Cropland, RIM-Only Cropland and RIM-Only Non-Cropland. The RIM-Only Cropland rate does not include the Present Value part of the MN CREP Cropland rate. The RIM-Only Non-Cropland is set at 60% of the U of M published numbers the same as for traditional RIM.

Q: When planning seeding, are we required to use the NRCS CREP calculator or will the regular calculator work?

A: The CREP calculator was formulated as a joint effort between NRCS and BWSR, we do recommend using the CREP calculator when making seed plans. The workbook can be found here:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/mn/technical/seeding+tools/>

Q: At the beginning of this webinar, what was it that was mentioned about CP2 in the wellhead areas and approaching the water suppliers? Something about finding additional funding?

A: Outside of MN CREP BWSR has the ability to utilize stand-alone RIM where MN CREP is not possible. In addition, a new Wellhead Protection – Partner Protection Grant program will be rolled out in June that allows BWSR to grant funds to local units of government for them to protect drinking water through their own easement, fee title or even a 20 year contract.

Q: We noticed on a new CRP factsheet that the max rate per acre would be \$300, does this apply to CREP as well?

A: MN CREP for 2019 will still be based on the CREP Agreement signed by the Governor and the USDA Secretary. Bottom-line what was in force in August of 2018 will continue for 2019. The changes to the Continuous CRP program, like the cap of \$300 per acre, No SIP, No PIP and 90% of last year's rate do not apply to MN CREP.

Q: For this CREP signup, will landowners be receiving a Sign up Incentive payment (SIP) and Practice Incentive Payment (PIP)

A: Yes